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The EB-5 Visa

A growing trend for South Africans



The number of people interested in emigrating to the United States continues to increase, proving that the American Dream is alive and well. The United States has the largest immigrant population in the world, and accounts for one-fifth of the world's total migrant population.

Despite the current administration's effort to curb immigration in the United States, bipartisan immigration programs, such as the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program, continue to thrive due to the ease for the applicants and the economic benefits to the country. Over the past decade, more than \$30 billion USD in EB-5 financing have been injected into the U.S. economy creating hundreds of thousands of jobs.

The EB-5 program permits foreign nationals and their immediate family members to obtain U.S. residency ("green cards") through an investment of \$500,000 USD. The project must create at least 10 jobs per investor and be located in an area with a high unemployment rate. After November 21, 2019, the investment amount is set to increase to \$900,000 USD due to a new regulation published in July. While the program dictates that the investment must be "at risk", if investors choose wisely, they can expect their funds back after the initial investment term.



CEO and Founder of EB5 Capital, Angelique Brunner, at The Highline construction site

The rise in popularity with the EB-5 program among South Africans has drastically increased over the last few years. Given the increased crime rate, growing debt to GDP ratio, and overall change in the standard of living, vast numbers of successful South Africans are relocating overseas. Among other trends, the uncertainty around Brexit has influenced South Africans to shift their focus from the United Kingdom to the United States. Within the last three years, there has been a 486% increase in the number of EB-5 petitions submitted by South Africans.

Due to the increased demand, EB5 Capital, a Washington, D.C. based company which raises capital from foreign investors under the EB-5 program, sponsored the Global Investment Immigration Summit in late June 2019 at Johannesburg's Sandton Convention Centre. The summit gave interested investors the opportunity to learn more about the program and allowed for industry professionals to network. Director of Investor Relations at EB5 Capital, Juline Kaleyias, commented that "South Africa is becoming an important market for our company and we're paying close attention to this growing interest in this region of the world".

Regional Centers, such as EB5 Capital, have been designated by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to provide these investment opportunities and facilitate the funding of such job-creating projects. EB5 Capital is one of the leading Regional Centers in the EB-5 industry with a 100% project approval rate. In the last decade, the firm has raised over \$680 million USD across its 25+ real estate developments. Their team has serviced clients from more than 60 countries and has successfully repaid past investors across multiple projects.

Since founding EB5 Capital in 2008, CEO Angelique Brunner and her team have been active leaders in the industry. With



Brian Ostar (Senior VP, Global Operations), Lulu Gordon (Sr. VP & General Counsel), Daniel Shiff (Managing Director), Angelique Brunner (CEO), Joseph Tilly (CFO), Jonathan Mullen (Sr VP, Investments)

extensive EB-5 knowledge and experience across all departments, the company has the necessary expertise to successfully structure quality investment opportunities, and to navigate the immigration process for their clients. To date, EB5 Capital has created over 30,000 jobs, attributing to the program's mission. "This administration is really focused on job creation. We expect that focus to align well with the goals and impact of the EB-5 program," said Brunner.

While individuals who seek this program still have love for their country, the largest push factor is to provide a secure future for their children. In response to the increased investment amount and growing interest within South Africa, the EB5 Capital team will be scheduling private meetings with prospective investors in Johannesburg between August 19 - 23, 2019.

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